Profiles of Internet use and parental involvement, and rates of online risks and problematic Internet use among Spanish adolescents

# Details

## Year

2017

## DOI

10.1016/j.chb.2017.06.027

## Issued

2017

## Language

English

## Volume

75

## Start Page

## End Page

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## Type

Journal article

## Journal

Computers in Human Behavior

## Publisher

Elsevier BV

## Topics

## Sample

Students from 255 secondary schools throughout the Galicia region of Spain completed an anonymous, online survey in school, with 39,993 having sufficient data for analyses.

## Implications For Parents About

Parental practices / parental mediation

## Implications For Educators About

Other

## Implications For Policy Makers About

Stepping up awareness and empowerment

# Abstract

This study aimed to empirically identify the major adolescent Internet user profiles in Spanish secondary
students based on self-reported pattern of use, level of parental control and parent-child conflict around
use, and to characterize their demographics and rates of engaging in online risky experiences and
screening positive for problematic Internet use (PIU). Students from 255 secondary schools throughout
the Galicia region of Spain completed an anonymous, online survey in school, with 39,993 having sufficient
data for analyses. We used two-stage cluster analysis to identify the groups, and then compared
demographics, online risks and PIU rates across groups. We identified five clusters: occasional users
(21.4%), moderate users with parental control (22.2%), moderate users without parental control (22.1%),
habitual users with parent-child conflict (16.8%), and intensive users (17.5%). The heaviest user groups had
the highest rates of any online risk (>60%) and PIU (>25%). The majority of adolescents with frequent
Internet use have engaged in online risky experiences. Such behaviors, and problematic Internet use, are
higher among adolescents without parental control over their use, so empowering parents to moderate
their child's Internet use is encouraged. These findings highlight the need to support parents, schools,
and policymakers in prevention, since it is a shared responsibility.

# Outcome

We identified five clusters: occasional users (21.4%), moderate users with parental control (22.2%), moderate users without parental control (22.1%), habitual users with parent-child conflict (16.8%), and intensive users (17.5%). The heaviest user groups had the highest rates of any online risk (>60%) and PIU (>25%). The majority of adolescents with frequent Internet use have engaged in online risky experiences. Such behaviors, and problematic Internet use, are higher among adolescents without parental control over their use, so empowering parents to moderate their child's Internet use is encouraged. These findings highlight the need to support parents, schools, and policymakers in prevention, since it is a shared responsibility.